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The Pskov-Pechery Monastery in the 16th Century*

NIKOLAY ANDREYEV

I

THE history of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery¹ goes back to the 1470's, but our knowledge of this very early period is based on legends of an 'unknown retreat near the Livonian border, where the monks first gathered in a cave which God had made'.² Here there existed the tradition of reclusion typical of that period and, in particular, of the Pskovian monasteries.³ The role of the monastery, however, changed abruptly from the moment the Pskov *d'yak* (secretary to the grand-ducal local administrators or *namestniki*), Mikhail Grigor'yevich Misyur'-Munekhin, began to take an interest in its development. Professor Sinaysky, one of the most recent investigators of the history of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery, disparagingly refers to 'a certain Misyur'-Munekhin',⁴ thus greatly under-estimating the latter's importance. There is some reason to believe that Munekhin may have been at some time the grand duke's treasurer. In 1493 he was sent to Egypt (hence the name Misyur') as Muscovite envoy, possibly to distribute alms from the grand duke to Orthodox churches there. He also visited Constantinople, Jerusalem and Salonica. In 1501 a Turkish ambassador extraordinary was expected in Moscow, and Munekhin, evidently as a specialist on the Middle East, was to have

* Dedicated to the memory of Princess Nathalie G. Yashwill.

¹ The monastery (Pskovo-Pecherskiy Monastyr', Est. Petseriklooster), situated as it was after the Russian revolution in Estonian territory, attracted the attention of the author of the following pages as one of the centres of ecclesiastical life in Pskovia (Pskovshchina), in connection with his studies of Western influences on the culture of Muscovite Russia. In 1937 and 1938, the Kondakov Institute of Prague, where the author was then working, sent him to do research in the monastery. The results of two visits, which together covered a period of about five months, were elaborated by the author in a series of talks given by him to various learned societies in Prague and were then prepared for publication. Unfortunately, all this material—including the text of the *Perepisnaya kniga* (Inventory) of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery (1639), which had been edited for publication—is now lost. Only the two photographs reproduced here have been preserved, as copies of them had been sent to certain people, who have recently returned them to the author. This circumstance, and also the importance of the problems connected with the history of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery, encouraged the author to return to this subject in the hope that his interpretation of facts, even though it can now only be documented from printed sources, may help to shed light on some controversial aspects of the history of Muscovite ecclesiastical policy in Pskovia.

² For bibliography and basic facts cf. N. I. Serebryansky, 'Ocherki po istorii monashestva v pskovskoy zemle' (*Chiteniya v obshchestve lyubiteley istorii i drevnostey rossiyskikh pri Moskovskom Universitete*, CCXXVI & CCXXVII, Moscow, 1908); E. V. Petukhov, 'O nekotorykh istoricheskikh i literaturnykh faktakh, svyazannykh s imenem Uspenskogo Pskovo-Pecherskogo Monastyrya v XVI i XVII vv.' (*Trudy X Arkheologicheskogo Syezda*, vol. I, Riga, 1899), *Setumaa*, Tartu, 1928, pp. 151 et seq.; V. I. Sinaysky, *Pskovo-Pecherskiy Monastyr'*, Riga, 1929.

³ *Polnoye Sobraniye Russkikh Letopisey* (abr. P.S.R.L.), IV, p. 282.

⁴ V. I. Sinaysky, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

been attached to him. In the opinion of Shakhmatov,⁵ Munekhin was closely associated with the Elder Filofey, who addressed him as *preizyashchnyy v dobrodetelyakh*, and appears to have played a part in the elaboration of the theory of 'Moscow the Third Rome'. Of the two letters from Filofey to Munekhin which have been preserved, one expounds the famous theory. Shakhmatov advances the opinion that Filofey edited Munekhin's *Skazaniye* of his travels in the Middle East, and that in the Chronograph of 1512 Filofey included certain details about the Holy Sepulchre and Constantinople which he had culled from Munekhin.⁶ Munekhin was appointed to the very responsible position of *d'yak* in Pskovia in 1510, when the Grand Duke Vasily III annexed the Pskov lands.⁷ Munekhin was in fact one of the most outstanding, most educated and most far-seeing people of the reign. Having lived a total of seventeen years in Pskov, Munekhin knew the area well and, thanks in part to his position, in part to his ability to ingratiate himself with high-placed Moscow officials by means of timely 'gifts', as was discovered after his death,⁸ and in part to his own personality,⁹ he appears to have been the most powerful figure of his day in Pskovia. The question inevitably arises: Why did Munekhin ten years before his death thus turn his attention to the Pskov-Pechery Monastery?

According to the Pskov Chronicle:

In the same year 1518 Munekhin, the Grand Duke's *d'yak* in Pskov, and his assistant Artemy Pskovitin, took under their protection a hitherto unknown retreat near the Livonian border. The Monastery of the Caves, which included the Livonian cave which God had made, was situated near the German frontier, in the Tailov parish, forty versts from Pskov, ten versts beyond Izborsk, and seven versts from Neuhausen [Est. Vastseliina]. On the holy days of the Most Pure Mother of God, in particular on her most holy Assumption, they and many others would bring gifts to the monastery. To begin with, a monastery was built on a hill and he [Munekhin] and his assistant Artemy looked after it as would a good father. And the Blessed Queen of Heaven, in particular on the glorious Feast of the

⁵ A. A. Shakhmatov, 'Puteshestviye M. G. Misyur'-Munekhina na vostok i Khronograf 1512 goda' (*Izvestiya otdeleniya russkogo yazyka i slovesnosti*, VI, St Petersburg, 1899, pp. 200-22).

⁶ Hildegard Schaefer, (*cf. Moskau das Dritte Rom*, Hamburg, 1929, pp. 56-9), remarks that Shakhmatov's theories on the Chronograph of 1512 are over-complicated. This does not affect the argument, as the author's alternative theory does not take into account the part necessarily played by real historical figures. Who, if not Filofey, was responsible for this matter? N. N. Maslennikova writes in the same spirit, although she makes no reference to Hildegard Schaefer: *cf. 'Ideologicheskaya bor'ba v pskovskoy literature v period obrazovaniya russkogo tsentralizovannogo gosudarstva' (Trudy Otdela Drevne-Russkoy Literatury*, VIII, Moscow-Leningrad, 1951, p. 202). She points out 'some slight differences' in outlook between the chronographer and Filofey. Surely, though, these may be taken as indicative of a certain evolution in Filofey's thought? A. M. Ammann concurs with Shakhmatov's theories (*Storia della Chiesa Russa e dei paesi limitrofi*, Turin, 1943, p. 139-140).

⁷ *P.S.R.L.*, IV, pp. 282, 287.

⁸ *P.S.R.L.*, IV, p. 297.

⁹ A. Nikitsky, *Ocherk vnutrenney istorii Pskova*, St Petersburg, 1873, pp. 304-5.

Assumption, showed mercy to those Orthodox Christians who came to her with faith and pure hearts, and a great multitude came on her holy days, and the Blessed Virgin showed her compassion by healing many sick. And her mercy came to the knowledge of our Sovereign Lord, the Tsar in Moscow, the Grand Prince of all the Russias, Vasily Ivanovich, and all the Russian land heard of the favours bestowed by the Blessed Virgin of the Caves, not only in her own blessed sanctuary, but also outside the monastery—those journeying to her were cured of all their afflictions on the way, and not only were Christians made whole, but also those of the Romish faith. And Misyur' with the peasants and [using] his own funds dug the slopes on both sides of the stream and built a great church, and they dug further and deeper into the hill and they began to build a monastery in the hollow between the hills, and the stream which flowed through the monastery was led uphill and the church of the Blessed Fathers of the Caves, Antony and Feodosy, was removed from the summit of the hill and included in the church of the Assumption, and it was consecrated on the Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin, and on feast days wafers and holy water were taken to our Sovereign Lord, the Grand Duke, and he gave them transport so that they could come to him on every feast day. And from then on the Monastery of the Caves became famous not only throughout Russia, but also in the Latin lands which are called German, even as far as the Varangian sea.¹⁰

The question arises of the date at which the chronicler's account was written, since it refers both to the commencement of Munekhin's activities and to the resultant fame of the monastery. In view of the fact that the cathedral of the Assumption was consecrated in 1523,¹¹ and that there is no mention here of the death of Munekhin, which occurred in 1528, this account must have been written between 1523 and 1528.

Munekhin's attentions were due not only to his piety, but were conditioned in the first place by problems of grand-ducal policy in Pskovia. Serebryansky,¹² the most competent investigator of the history of Pskovian monasticism, has already cautiously suggested that Muscovite clerical influence in Pskovia was of a purely official character, since Muscovite theological ideologies remained foreign to the Pskovians. Thus, for example, it is typical that Pskov, until the arrival of Muscovite settlers, did not venerate St Sergius of Radonezh, and that the foundation of churches dedicated to him and to other Muscovite saints, such as the Metropolitan Peter, began only in 1510.¹³ The Pskovians observed a very hostile attitude towards the Muscovite archbishops of Novgorod: Sergy, 'weak-minded', who remained in office only two years (1483-4), and

¹⁰ *P.S.R.L.*, IV, p. 293. The Pskov chronicler also notes under the year 1522-3 that Munekhin gave assistance to the Elder Filaret and other monks of the monastery. *P.S.R.L.*, IV, p. 295.

¹¹ Serebryansky, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

¹² *Ibid.*, 337.

¹³ *P.S.R.L.*, IV, p. 291-2.

Gennady Gonozov (1485–1504), who approved the methods of the Inquisition as a weapon against heresy.¹⁴ This opposition was due principally to the archbishops' economic and administrative policies. For as long as Pskovia, despite the presence of Muscovite officials, remained a politically independent state, the Muscovite secular authorities took no part in the life of the Pskov churches, and church quarrels remained within the competence of the Archbishop of Novgorod.

The main factor which brought about the unification of Pskov and Muscovy was the realisation of the unmistakable permanence of the menace offered by the Livonian Order. A secondary factor was the frequent squabbles between Moscow and Novgorod and between Novgorod and Pskov.

When, in 1510, however, the Pskov *veche* bell was removed and political independence from Moscow was lost, the displeasure of certain circles of Pskovian society with Muscovite innovations manifested itself very openly, and this is reflected in the mordant writings of the Pskov chronicler.¹⁵ If until then the church life of Pskov had interested the Muscovite government very little, it was now to be the subject of intensive study. The results of this study were unlikely to delight Moscow. The Blessed Yefrosin, one of the spiritual fore-runners of Nil Sorsky had evolved a theory which had had great success in Pskovia, namely that secular authorities should not interfere in monastic affairs. The Pskov chronicle for 1471 repeats Yefrosin's conclusions¹⁶ and the Elder Filofey, also an inmate of a Pskovian monastery, although an undoubted supporter of Muscovite policy, nevertheless agreed with this theory (which from the Muscovite point of view was quite inadmissible), of the essential autonomy of the church.¹⁷ It is most important to note that Yefrosin's rules for the organisation of monastic life were respected also in the monasteries founded by his disciples in the 'impenetrable wastes', as, for example, in the Verkhne-Ostrovsky Monastery of St Peter and St Paul, founded by Dosifey, in the Ozersky Monastery of the Intercession of our Lady founded by Ilarion, and in the Kripetsky Monastery of St John the Divine founded by Savva. Moreover, these rules continued to be observed up to the beginning and sometimes until the middle of the 17th century, not only in all these monasteries but also in other Pskovian monasteries founded independently of Yefrosin's direct influence, such as the Mal'sky Monastery of the Blessed Onufriya founded by Eliazar and the Porkhovo-Il'insky Monastery

¹⁴ Nikitsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 326–30. A. D. Sedel'nikov, 'Rasskaz 1490 goda ob inkvizitsii', (*Trudy Otdela Drevne-Russkoy Literatury*, I, 1932, p. 52).

¹⁵ A. N. Nasonov, 'Iz istorii pskovskogo letopisaniya' (*Istoricheskiye Zapiski*, AN SSSR, XVIII, 1946, p. 266).

¹⁶ *P.S.R.L.*, IV, pp. 291–2; V. O. Klyuchevsky, 'Pskovskiye spory', *Opyty i issledovaniya*, I, Petrograd, 1918, pp. 32–106.

¹⁷ V. Malinin, *Starets Eleazarova monastyrya Filofey i yego poslaniya*, Kiev, 1901.

founded by the Blessed Ioakim. But even the monasteries unaffected by Yefrosin's theories were not in agreement with Moscow. This partly explains the energetic building of churches which was undertaken in the town of Pskov and in the surrounding area after the union of Moscow and Pskovia, and carried out either in the name of the Grand Duke Vasily III or on the initiative of the Muscovite settlers, who had been introduced, as was the Muscovite custom, into the newly annexed territory. In Pskovia three hundred of the 'best families' were ousted and an equal number of settlers¹⁸ were brought in, while, during the twenty-three years of Vasily III's reign, no less than seventeen churches were built,¹⁹ including St Kseniya's, demonstratively founded on the anniversary of Pskovia's incorporation in the Muscovite state.²⁰ However, the settlers also built churches dedicated to Pskovian local saints. In other words, the policy of Moscow in church construction aimed simultaneously at the assimilation of Pskovian religious consciousness into the Muscovite heritage and at making concessions to local feeling. An analogy to all this can be found in the tactics employed by Moscow in Novgorod, where a similar policy was also adopted, from 1510, and would therefore appear to have been the considered approach of Vasily III to the furtherance of the spiritual centralisation of his dominions.²¹

Also at the turn of the 16th century there made itself felt the disturbing influence of new so-called mystico-didactic icon subjects, from the West. These subjects appeared of such inadmissible novelty as to shock many Muscovites, but they were quickly assimilated in the Pskov tradition of iconography.

Archbishop Gennady was among the first to call attention to these icons, but the Pskovians 'listened to the icon-painters and not to the archbishop'. Subsequently, in 1518 or 1519, an icon of similar composition was discovered by the Pskov *d'yak* Munekhin, who considered that it was 'an uncommon subject, only to be found in Pskov, and nowhere else in Russia'. Munekhin sent this icon to the distinguished translator and expert on Western matters Dmitry Gerasimov, who sought the opinion of Maksim Grek. This authoritative scholar declared that the composition had evidently been invented by the icon-painters. Nevertheless, notwithstanding all opposition, and in part to spite Moscow conservatism, these new subjects continued to be developed in Pskovia, and later, in 1547, when Pskovian icon-painters were invited to Moscow to paint icons for the cathedral of the Assumption, they caused no little stir by introducing their westernised forms into the Kremlin itself. These icons show that the

¹⁸ *P.S.R.L.*, IV, p. 282.

¹⁹ *P.S.R.L.*, IV, p. 282.

²⁰ *P.S.R.L.*, IV, pp. 291, 294, 296.

²¹ See N. Andreyev, 'Mitropolit Makariy kak deyatel' religioznogo iskusstva', *Seminarium Kondakovianum*, VII, Prague, 1935, pp. 228-31.

Pskovians had greatly matured and developed the new style since the beginning of the century.²²

Against this background the chronicler's notes on Munekhin's interest in the Pskov-Pechery Monastery take on their true meaning. Munekhin had considerable experience of the problems of church ideology, gained in part from his observation of Eastern Orthodox churches, which had evidently given him an insight into the dangers of the loss of church unity. As representative of Moscow in Pskovia he gave proof not only of his wide experience, but also of outstanding intelligence, and it is clear that he was not merely giving rein to his religious feelings, for which, anyhow, he had ample opportunity in the already existing religious centres of Pskov, but was acting in accordance with his politico-religious calculations. We know too that it was Munekhin who dealt with church politics in Pskovia. As an instance of his duties, the following may be cited:

In the year 1528. The Archbishop of Novgorod came to Pskov on 26 January, and the Grand Duke ordered him to remain in Pskov ten days, whereas he wished to stay the whole month, and Misyur' the *d'yak* showed him the order of the Grand Duke that he was to remain only ten days, about which His Grace the Lord Makary knew nothing.²³

Munekhin created, in the Pskov-Pechery Monastery, what can only be termed an outpost of Muscovite Orthodoxy. A proof that he was interested in the future of the monastery was the extraordinary fact of his countersigning its statute. The further fact that he effected structural changes in the monastery with the aid of 'requisitioned' peasants and with 'his money',²⁴ i.e. with the money at the disposal of the grand-ducal *d'yak*, lends weight to this argument. The continuing favoured position of the monastery is demonstrated by the fact that in 1595²⁵ one of those very monasteries which continued to maintain Yefrosin's rule, the Verkhne-Ostrovsky Monastery of St Peter and St Paul, by order of the Tsar Feodor Ivanovich was transferred to the control of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery. This would tend to show that Munekhin's policy was upheld long after his death. Meanwhile the rapid rise of the monastery's importance can doubtless be attributed to Munekhin's patronage. Its abbot had already made the journey to Moscow with the sacrament in 'the grand duke's own transport'.

In their turn the Muscovite rulers, in the persons of the young Ivan IV, his cousin Prince Vladimir Andreyevich, his son the Tsare-

²² N. Andreyev, 'Inok Zinoviy Otenskiy ob ikonopochitanii i ikonopisanii', *Seminarium Kondakovianum*, VIII, Prague, 1936, pp. 272-4; N. Andreyev, 'Ivan Groznyy i ikonopis' 16-ogo veka', *Annales de l'Institut Kondakov—Mélanges A. A. Vasiliev*, X, Prague, 1938, pp. 195-7.

²³ *P.S.R.L.*, IV, p. 297.

²⁴ *P.S.R.L.*, IV, p. 293.

²⁵ Serebryansky, *op. cit.*, pp. 574-5.

vich Ivan, his first wife Anastasiya Romanovna, and later Tsar Feodor and Boris Godunov and his family, never ceased to honour the monastery with their special protection. This was expressed either by personal visits to attend services or by costly presents, e.g. *epitaphia* embroidered by the wives and the daughters of the tsars, bells, gold or silver utensils, and land.²⁶ Of these signs of special attention particularly noteworthy is Ivan IV's visit to Pskovia in 1547 in the company of his cousin, Prince Vladimir Andreyevich, when they spent one night in Pskov, a second in Voronichi, and a third in the Pskov-Pechery Monastery, after which they immediately took their departure from the province. Moreover, the tsar granted the monastery much land and certain fishing rights.²⁷ It is characteristic that it was the Pskov-Pechery Monastery that Ivan IV singled out for a visit during such a short stay in Pskovia.

Munekhin died on 11 March 1528. His activities in ecclesiastical matters reflect in some measure the tendency of certain administrators of Muscovite Russia at the end of the 15th and during the 16th century to check the inclination of the church and monastical authorities to stress the superiority of the spiritual authority over the temporal.²⁸ With his death the first historical stage in the emergence of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery as one of the most important Orthodox centres on the contemporary Western frontier of the Muscovite state comes to an end.

II

The second and, from the historical point of view, the most interesting stage in the development of the monastery is linked with the name of its abbot, Kornily, who, after his death, became one of the more particularly revered local saints. From all remaining documents it would appear that Kornily was possessed of a most outstanding personality, to which scholars have devoted no little attention.²⁹

²⁶ For Ivan IV's presents compare 'Pskovo-Pecherskiy Monastyr' v 1586' (*Starina i Novizna*, VII, St Petersburg, 1903); Serebryansky, Petukhov, *op. cit.*, pp. 257-61, Sinaysky, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

²⁷ Maslennikova (*op. cit.*, p. 211) mistakenly understood the text of the *P.S.R.L.*, IV, p. 307, taking the word 'isady' to be a corruption of 'sady' (= orchards). What is meant here (cf. I. I. Sreznevsky, *Materialy dlya slovary drevnerusskogo yazyka po pis'mennym pamyatnikam*, Izd. Otdeleniya russkogo yazyka i slovesnosti, Imp. Ak. Nauk, St Petersburg, 1890, cols. 1111-12), is 'a quay' or 'fishing hamlet'. It is interesting that Sreznevsky illustrates the meaning of the word by citing as an example of its use the very *isady* 'belonging to the Pskov-Pechery Monastery'. For its modern Russian equivalent see Dal', *Tolkovyy slovar' velikorusskogo yazyka*, II, col. 111. [slovo—'isad'].

²⁸ N. P. Popov, 'Afanasiyevskiy izvod povesti o Varlaame i Iosafe', (*Izvestiya otdeleniya russkogo yazyka i slovesnosti*, AN SSSR, St Petersburg, 1926, XXXI, pp. 189-230). Cf. also the analogous activities of the *d'yak* Viskovaty in N. Andreyev, 'O dele d'yaka Viskovatogo' (*Seminarium Kondakovianum*, V, Prague, 1932). Cf. also A. A. Zimin, 'O politicheskoy doktrine Iosifa Volotskogo', *Trudy Otdela Drevne-Russkoy Literatury*, ix, 1953.

²⁹ Serebryansky, *op. cit.*, p. 339; Sinaysky, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-16; Maslennikova, *op. cit.*, pp. 206-8; Igor Smolitch, *Russisches Mönchtum*, Augsburg, 1953, pp. 323-4.

The first fact deserving notice is Kornily's youthfulness on his appointment as abbot in 1528—he was twenty-eight. This proves two facts, namely that Kornily's attainments were outstanding and that he was quite undoubtedly pro-Muscovite in his opinions and monastic activities. It must not be forgotten that, in 1526, Makary, the great church reformer and a firm believer in autocracy and in the unity of Russia, was appointed Archbishop of Novgorod. It is inconceivable that the Pskov-Pechery Monastery, under the patronage of the Muscovite authorities, could have been ruled by an individual whose opinions conflicted with the point of view held by Makary and the immediate representatives of Muscovite administration in Pskov.

We know from the clear indication at the end of the 'Tale of the Foundation of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery'³⁰ that Kornily was its author. From the point of view of historical criticism, Kornily's writings and his sources of information engender complete confidence in the veracity of his account.³¹ Indeed, his whole method of approach is remarkable for the 16th century.³² 'I have written nothing from imagination, of that which has not been, but of what has been and of what is, things I have seen or heard, and, having received permission, have set down.' In the light of this statement, confirmed by the researches of later scholars, the author's silences and emphases take on particular significance.

Kornily's *Povest'* confirms that, at the time when the extensive alterations to the monastery were undertaken, the abbot Dorofey had an assistant in a certain much venerated elder, Filaret, whose existence is otherwise mentioned only once, in passing, by the Pskov Chronicler (*cf.* note 10, p. 320).³³ From the *Povest'*, it appears that Dorofey had to resign his position as abbot as a result of the action of a certain 'trouble-maker', as did Gerasim, his successor, also 'because of a certain ill-wisher'.³⁴ Kornily, who had been requested to write the history of the monastery, presumably considered it impossible for diplomatic reasons to be more precise about the identity of this 'trouble-maker' and 'ill-wisher'. If he did not himself witness these happenings he most certainly must have heard about them from Dorofey and Gerasim, who were still living in the monastery at this later period. Who could this trouble-maker have been? Within the bounds of known facts there would seem to be two possible theories as to his identity. It could either have been the all-powerful *d'yak* Misyur'-Munekhin, dissatisfied for some reason with the activities of

³⁰ Published by Serebryansky in appendices to *op. cit.*, pp. 545-51.

³¹ V. A. Klyuchevsky, *Zhitiya svyatykh kak istorich'skiy istochnik*, Moscow, 1871, p. 250.

³² Smolitch, *op. cit.*, p. 324.

³³ A. N. Nasonov (*op. cit.*, p. 263) uses this fact as one of his arguments to prove that Abbot Kornily had some connection with the Pskov *Letopis'* (the so-called *Stroyevskiy spisok* or, according to Nasonov's terminology, the 'Third Pskov Chronicle').

³⁴ *Povest'*, *cf.* Serebryansky, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-5.

these abbots, in which case it is understandable that the author of the *Povest'* would not name him; or the 'trouble' may have been the result of Kornily's own intrigues, which would point to great personal ambition, persistence and to a certain duplicity. In this case his words would be simply a literary cover for his actions. The possibility of this second hypothesis is indirectly confirmed only by a description of Kornily, written at the end of the 16th century, in which he is represented as a great rationalist, sceptic and realist, particularly in his early years, i.e. at the time when he wrote the *Povest'*. The author recounts how, when Kornily did not include in his history the legend of the Blessed Mark, supposed to have been the first hermit of the future Pskov-Pechery Monastery, he began to lose his sight. The Blessed Mark then appeared to him in a dream and dispersed his scepticism, after which Kornily rewrote the *Povest'*, and his eyesight returned.³⁵

Unfortunately, the material in the Russian archives on the history of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery has not yet all been published.³⁶ This circumstance makes it possible for certain research workers to advance various theories as to the character of Kornily's activities as abbot, in which at times far too large a part is played by hypothesis. To this category can be ascribed the work of N. N. Maslennikova, who, basing her arguments on the interesting conjecture of Nasonov (*cf.* note 33, p. 325), finds it possible to write about the sympathy of Kornily for 'the party of non-possessors' and considers him a representative of separatist tendencies and feudal interests. She also concludes that his opinions were 'reactionary', his outlook 'narrow' and that, in the light of all this, 'he was one of the most powerful representatives of the *boyarstvo* in Pskov, and, furthermore, one of the most dangerous'. Further, it appears from Maslennikova's interpretation, that Kornily was in close contact with Kurbsky and that in this way 'the opposition of the local *boyarstvo* is transformed into the opposition of the *boyarstvo* in general'. In the light of this theory Kornily's execution at the hands of Ivan IV in 1570 is given its 'ideological explanation'.³⁷

What is in fact known of Kornily's activities as abbot? He appears to have been in many ways a typical Josephian who was principally interested in the provision of material splendour and spiritual riches for the monastery entrusted to his care and in improving its economic position.

³⁵ Serebryansky, *op. cit.*, pp. 51–52.

³⁶ V. I. Malyshev, 'Rukopisnoye sobraniye Pskovskogo oblastnogo krayevedcheskogo muzeya' (*Voprosy istorii*, XII, Moscow, 1953, p. 181); Petukhov, *op. cit.*, p. 257; Sinaysky, *op. cit.*, p. 6; *Povest' o prikhozhennii Stefana Batoriya na grad Pskov*, AN SSSR, Moscow-Leningrad, 1952, p. 126.

³⁷ Maslennikova, *op. cit.*, pp. 211–13.

Thus, in 1538, he added a stone church in honour of Our Lady Hodegetria to the small branch of the monastery in Pskov itself, and also a hostel. These buildings were very important inasmuch as they were a daily reminder of the existence of the monastery in the chief town of Pskovia. It was evidently the policy of the abbot to attract visitors in this way to the main monastery. Apparently Kornily also paid particular attention to stone constructions in the monastery itself, since we have no evidence of the existence of stone buildings within its precincts before his time. He had the wooden church of the Forty Martyrs moved outside the monastery and in 1541, on the vacated site, the stone church of the Annunciation was erected. Church building was continued by the Abbot Kornily in the districts coming under the influence of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery, as, for instance, in Neuhausen (Est. Vastseliina), where he built an Orthodox church and also in the villages of Agarevo and Topino.³⁸

It was evidently in these years that Kornily began to prepare his grandiose scheme for a massive stone wall to be built round the monastery which was finally realised in 1565. Mainly constructed from blocks of stone, the wall has seven towers and is 887 yards long, in parts twelve yards high, and over one and a half yards wide. Obviously such a plan was not an act of improvisation, but demanded careful economic preparation. The completion of the plan which turned the Pskov-Pechery Monastery into a first-class fortress, coincided with the climax of the Livonian War. Later, in 1581, these fortifications were fully justified when the King of Poland, Stefan Batory, during his advance on Pskov, found that his crack divisions were unable to take the monastery. It is worth mentioning that this system of fortifications, carried out by the monk Pafnuty Zabolotsky (previously Pavel Zabolotsky, one of Ivan IV's generals), included the church of St Nicholas the Miracle-worker, below which there was a subterranean arsenal and which had *boynitsy* (loopholes) in the walls. The church commanded the *ostrog* (i.e. the open triangle of ground between the first and second gates of the monastery). The very fact of Kornily's architectural activities (in the *Synodik* of the monastery he is always referred to as the 'builder') and more especially his attention to the provision of adequate fortification, would appear to indicate quite unambiguously the extent of Kornily's sympathies 'for the party of the non-possessors'.

Judging by Prince Andrey Kurbsky's letters to the Elder Vas'yan Muromtsev,³⁹ evidently one of the spiritual authorities of the mona-

³⁸ Serebryansky, *op. cit.*, p. 342, It is an interesting fact that the monks, besides their other employments, manufactured green glazed tiles. K. K. Romanov, 'Pskov, Novgorod i Moskva v ikh kul'turno-khudozhestvennykh vzaimootnosheniyakh' (*Izvestiya Rossiyskoy Akademii Istorii Material'noy Kul'tury*, IV, Leningrad, 1925, p. 234).

³⁹ *Russkaya Istoricheskaya Biblioteka* (abr. R.I.B.), St Petersburg, 1914, col. 405-10.

stery, it is clear that the Abbot Kornily had fairly large sums of money at his disposal, out of which he was able to give loans to Ivan IV's favourites, as, for example, to Kurbsky himself. There is equally reason to believe that large grants of land were made to the monastery by Ivan IV and that the monks were also granted fishing rights on⁴⁰ the Lake of Pskov (Est. Pihkva järv).

As to Kornily's other interests, we know that, like the Archbishop and later the Metropolitan Makary, he painted icons, since we have direct evidence of his activities in this direction in the *Perepisnaya kniga* (Inventory) of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery for the year 1586:⁴¹ 'The icon of St John Chrysostom was taken from the Topino parish of Neuhausen and Kornily, the abbot of the Pechery monastery, painted the icon in Topino'. Judging by the *gramota* of the Archbishop of Novgorod, Feodosy,⁴² Kornily insisted on strict discipline in the monastery, particularly in the case of benefactors of the monastery living within its walls. This was, in fact, in accordance with the opinions of the tsar, in so far as can be judged from Ivan IV's sharply expressed injunctions in his epistle to the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery on the subject of Sheremet'yev.⁴³ Archbishop Feodosy's *gramota* would seem to indicate that Kornily's position in this question anticipates the views of the tsar by many years. It must not be forgotten that Kornily had met the tsar several times during the latter's visits to the monastery in 1547 (*cf.* page 324) and in 1558, and therefore was probably conversant with his views on church matters. This last meeting of 1558 evidently came about as a result of the miracle of the icons in Narva.

At the beginning of the Livonian War Russian troops took Narva. They took advantage of an outbreak of fire in the town to cross the river Narova from Ivangorod. This conflagration, according to the Russian chroniclers and also to Kurbsky, was the result of a miracle performed by two icons, that of Our Lady Hodegetria and that of St Nicholas the Miracle-worker, which the Livonians had jeeringly flung into a bonfire, whereupon there had occurred a general conflagration. However, the Russians found the icons unharmed and sent them to Moscow with great ceremony, accompanied by a number of the clergy, among whom was Kornily of the Pechery monastery.⁴⁴ It may be assumed that it was after this journey of Kornily's

⁴⁰ *P.S.R.L.*, IV, p. 307: *cf.* also note 27, p. 324.

⁴¹ *Starina i Novizna, Istoricheskiy Sbornik*, VI, St. Petersburg, 1903.

⁴² *Dopolneniya k aktam istoricheskim*, I, no. 35, St Petersburg, 1846, pp. 36-8.

⁴³ D. S. Likhachov, 'Poslaniye Groznogo v Kirillo-Belozerskiy Monastyr' v 1573 godu' (*Trudy Otdela Drevne-Russkoy Literatury*, AN SSSR, VIII, Moscow-Leningrad, 1951, pp. 247 *et. seq.*); *Poslaniya Ivana Groznogo*, izd. Akademii Nauk, Moscow-Leningrad, 1951, pp. 162 *et seq.*

⁴⁴ *P.S.R.L.*, IV, p. 310; *R.I.B.*, XXXI, pp. 230-3. In Estonia in 1937, the author examined what purported to be these same icons. The icon of St Nicholas the Miracle-worker in the Cathedral of the Transfiguration at Narva could not be attributed to this period, as it

to Moscow that the icon of Our Lady of Tenderness was brought to the Pskov-Pechery Monastery. This icon was a copy made by a certain monk Arseny of the famous and very ancient icon of Our Lady of Vladimir, which was steeped in the traditions of the land of Russia, and which Ivan IV held in special reverence: he even composed a special *sticheron* in its praise.⁴⁵

Particularly important too was that branch of Kornily's activities which was connected with his missionary work among the Estonian population.⁴⁶

During the Livonian campaign in 1560, the Russian victory at Vel'yan (Viljandi, Germ. Fellin) took place after a priest, Feoktist, had been sent to the troops bearing holy water and wafers from the Pskov-Pechery Monastery. In the evening the town caught fire as the result of the action of heated cannon-balls and was taken. This was attributed to the intercession of Our Lady of the Pechery monastery, as were a series of victories in 1558. In memory of this occurrence the Livonian bell from Vel'yan was sent by the army commanders to the Pskov-Pechery Monastery,⁴⁷ where it was hung in the Church of St Nicholas the Miracle-worker. It was still to be seen in the monastery in 1938.

In the spiritual life of the monastery there appears a series of features explained by the proximity of the frontier and the continuous contact with the West European world. For instance, the later famous Elder Artemy, the abbot of the Troitse-Sergiyeva Lavra, spent some time at the Pskov-Pechery Monastery from whence he journeyed to the Livonian town of Neuhausen for discussions on the differences between the Catholic and Orthodox creeds. Later, in 1554, in the act of accusation brought against Artemy in the *Sobornaya gramota*, of sympathy towards Bashkin's heresy, this journey was held against him, since it was considered that Artemy should have known all the advantages of the Orthodox faith over the Catholic without discussion. Certain scholars as, for instance, Petukhov,⁴⁸ consider that, in the light of this incident, the Pskov-Pechery Monastery played a definite part in the development of those ideas and theories, which are connected with the Muscovite search for spiritual truth and for the true Christian way of life, i.e. of the non-possessors. But

was of 17th-century workmanship, but the icon of Our Lady in the Ivangorod church (examined in the presence of Father A. Kiselyov, now in New York) was a beautiful example in the Novgorod manner, dating from the late 15th or early 16th century. What was most interesting was that the face of the icon bore unmistakable traces of burning, as a result of which all the paint on the face had cracked, and it had been very clumsily covered with drying oil. This would appear to confirm the legend.

⁴⁵ N. Ye. Andreyev, 'Ivan Groznyy' (*op. cit.*, p. 186, note 5).

⁴⁶ Serebryansky, *op. cit.*, p. 344; *Setumaa*, Tartu, 1928.

⁴⁷ *P.S.R.L.*, IV, p. 312.

⁴⁸ Petukhov, *op. cit.*, p. 260.

this can hardly be considered a characteristic feature of the Trans-Volga Elders only, since discussion of the basic tenets of the faith was an inseparable part of the Russian intellectual life of that period, and even Tsar Ivan IV himself did not refuse to discuss religious questions with foreigners.⁴⁹ The fact that the majority of monks in the Pechery monastery were intellectually alive cannot be construed as evidence that they were anything but convinced Josephians. In any case, there is not the slightest reason to consider Kornily a non-possessor. Prince Kurbsky says in his history:⁵⁰

Kornily, the abbot of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery is a holy and blessed man and has done many pious and renowned works. From his youth upwards he was renowned for holy living and he has raised the monastery by many works, by prayers to God and also by countless prayers to the Blessed Virgin. And all this continued until the monastery acquired estates and while the monks lived as non-possessors, but when the monks began to grow covetous of property and especially of real estate, that is villages and hamlets, the miracles of God ceased.

This of course is nothing more than polemical journalism. Kurbsky was always inclined to stylisation, particularly so if his work, according to I. N. Zhdanov's conjecture,⁵¹ aimed at hindering the possible candidature of Ivan IV to the Polish throne.⁵² Kurbsky's arguments about the Pskov-Pechery Monastery are an example of his usual manner since we know that the monastery was at the height of its influence when Kornily was abbot. In its non-possessive period, i.e. before Munekhin's interest in it, the monastery had so few monks that it was unable to hold daily celebration of the mass, and only during Kornily's rule did it prosper to such an extent as to become the richest monastery in Pskovia.⁵³

Kurbsky, in his letter to the Elder of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery, Vas'yan Muromtsev,⁵⁴ says that he first visited the monastery seven years before, i.e. in 1557, or, at the latest, in January 1558, at the very beginning of the Livonian War, when he met the elders and abbot of the monastery.

In January 1558 the Russian army, the advance-guard of which was under the command of Kurbsky and Pyotr Golovin, advanced from Pskov and crossed the Livonian border in three columns near Neuhausen.⁵⁵ In other words, the Pskov-Pechery Monastery lay full in the path of the Russian advance. It would seem natural to assume

⁴⁹ I. N. Zhdanov, 'Sochineniya tsarya Ivana Vasilievicha', *Sochineniya*, I, 1904, pp. 106-109, 135, 137-9.

⁵⁰ *R.I.B.*, XXXI, cols. 320-1.

⁵¹ I. N. Zhdanov, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

⁵² N. I. Kostomarov, *Russkaya istoriya v zhizneopisaniiakh yego glavneyshikh deyateley*, III, St Petersburg, 1880, p. 513.

⁵³ Serebryansky, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

⁵⁴ *R.I.B.*, XXXI, col. 405.

⁵⁵ A. N. Yasinsky, *Sochineniya knyazya Kurbskogo kak istoricheskiy material*, Kiev, 1889, p. 53.

that Kurbsky visited the monastery not only at the moment when he was in command of the vanguard of the Russian advance, but also rather earlier during the period of preparation for the campaign. This interpretation is not at variance with Kurbsky's statement that when he first took part in an attack against the Germans he visited the monastery.⁵⁶ It follows from this that the letter to Muromtsev was indeed most likely written in 1564. Thus Kurbsky's first-hand knowledge of the monastery was gleaned only towards the end of the 1550's, and his characterisation of it, while typical of his own opinions, can scarcely be accepted as a truly well-informed exposition of Kornily's ideas. Scholars attach particular importance to the fact of Kurbsky's correspondence with Vas'yan Muromtsev, of whose scholarship and knowledge of Holy Writ Kurbsky had a high opinion: 'He was a learned man, well-versed in the Scriptures'. For some reason they consider that this correspondence proves that the elders and abbot of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery shared Kurbsky's opinions. However, the author considers that these conclusions are mistaken. In the first place, contrary to the generally accepted opinion,⁵⁷ all these letters of Kurbsky's were obviously written to Vas'yan Muromtsev before Kurbsky's flight. It can be assumed in accordance with Petukhov⁵⁸ that 'the letter of Prince Andrey Kurbsky about false passages to be found in the Scriptures to a certain monk in the Pechery monastery'⁵⁹ was also, judging by its contents, addressed to Vas'yan Muromtsev. The end of this letter is very interesting, since Kurbsky appears to be informing the elder whom he so revered that the tsar is beginning to show his displeasure: 'I implore you to pray for me from Babylon'.⁶⁰ Thus it would appear that Kurbsky had been informed of the tsar's wrath which was caused, in the opinion of Yasinsky, by the unsuccessful negotiations over the surrender of fortresses held by the Livonians.⁶¹ There is a postscript to the letter: 'See the end of this letter, what says this honourable man of the slanders he has heard about himself and of the evil plans of the Grand Duke to kill him, and who therefore writes and is in perplexity as to how he may avoid this unjust death'.⁶² It would seem more than probable that these words were written before Kurbsky's flight, but when the latter already realised that the security of his former position as the tsar's favourite was fast disappearing. In the *Letter to the Elder*

⁵⁶ *R.I.B.*, XXXI, col. 405.

⁵⁷ Petukhov, *op. cit.*, p. 261; Y. S. Lur'ye, 'Voprosy vneshney i vnutrenney politiki v poslaniyakh Ivana IV', *Poslaniya Ivana Groznogo*, AN SSSR, 1950, pp. 472 *et. seq.*; Maslennikova, *op. cit.*, p. 207. Lur'ye doubts whether all Kurbsky's letters were written after his flight, but offers no alternative theory.

⁵⁸ Petukhov, *Russkaya literatura*, Yur'yev (Tartu), 1912, p. 190.

⁵⁹ *R.I.B.*, XXXI, cols 377-382.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ Yasinsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-2.

⁶² *R.I.B.*, XXXI, cols 383-404. Vas'yan had probably sent this letter to someone and added the postscript as his explanation of Kurbsky's words.

Vas'yan,⁶³ which contains a general criticism of all classes of Russian society, there is also criticism levelled at the tsar, but it is so moderate compared with Kurbsky's later attacks that it merely indicates that his critical attitude towards Ivan IV is becoming more marked, and not that he has already become his open enemy. Kurbsky, in his usual literary manner, gives a detailed exposition of his basic opinions, points out that many Eastern and Western kingdoms have perished as the result of their lack of real religion, and contrasts these with the Russian land, on which God has showered so many favours.

The whole of our Russain land from border to border is as fair as growing wheat and lives in the faith of God. God's churches over the face of Russia are as the stars in their multitudes in the heavens; many monasteries have been built; they are without number—who knows how many they are?—and in them are a multitude of reverent monks. Tsars and Princes have confessed the Orthodox faith for countless generations and are today annointed by the Most High to sit in judgment and to defend their country from the enemy.⁶⁴

It is not necessary to elaborate all Kurbsky's opinions here, but it is important to note his criticism of the tsar:

The Mighty, called to rule and appointed by God to give justice tempered with mercy to their subjects and to rule their realm in humility and mercy, have, for our sins, instead of being merciful, become raging wild beasts. Thus not only do they not spare men of a like nature, but punish their well-wishers with unheard-of tortures and death. It is impossible to describe in fitting language all the ills of this time, because of his insatiable robbery of other people's property and the injustice of the courts and the neglect of the interests of the state.⁶⁵

There can be no doubt that there, in a condensed form, is already expressed the programme of the future accusation of Ivan IV in Kurbsky's letters and tracts. It is possible that at the time he wrote this letter Kurbsky had already received the safe-conduct from the Polish king, the possibility of which is admitted even by so convinced an apologist of Kurbsky as Yasinsky.⁶⁶

In his next letter to *Vas'yan*, Kurbsky reproaches him and the Abbot Kornily for having refused to send him money by messenger. It would seem natural that no such transaction could have taken place after Kurbsky's flight. It is more likely that he needed a large sum of money to cover the preparations. The tone of his letter is marked by acerbity: he is obviously annoyed at the refusal to grant him a loan, and he points out that he has borrowed money earlier and always

⁶³ *R.I.B.*, XXXI, col. 382.

⁶⁴ *R.I.B.*, XXXI, cols 393-4.

⁶⁵ *R.I.B.*, XXXI, col. 395.

⁶⁶ Yasinsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-4; P. A. Sadikov, *Ocherki po istorii oprichniny*, AN SSSR, Moscow-Leningrad, 1950, p. 16.

returned it. He reminds Vas'yan that he first came to the monastery at the beginning of the first Livonian campaign, when the monks were very alarmed at the prospect of imminent fighting. Kurbsky further points out that he has fought for seven years without ceasing and that the monks are now neither 'alarmed' nor 'terrified', but live quietly and in peaceful conditions; it is due to his military activities that the monastery has received various grants of land from the tsar, yet although they have the money they refuse to lend it. He ends his letter with a bitter phrase: 'If this is the attitude of holy monks, what can I then expect of others?'⁶⁷

This text shows that Kurbsky has not received any specific support from the abbot of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery. On the contrary, it is as if, knowing of the changing attitude of the prince and the gathering wrath of the tsar, the Abbot Kornily and Vas'yan had hurriedly disavowed him. At the end of this letter to Vas'yan there is a postscript in a 17th-century hand:⁶⁸

For God's sake, as you fear death, take out my writings from under the stove. They were written in the Pskov-Pechery Monastery. One is in columns and the other on sheets of paper and they were placed under the stove in my small cabin. They are written on subjects of state importance. Either send them to our Sovereign Lord or keep them in the cathedral of the Assumption in the Monastery of the Caves. There remain several sheets of paper which are sewn together, but not yet bound in leather: do not lose these either, for God's sake.⁶⁹

From this curious postscript it would appear that Kurbsky had several times stayed in the Pskov-Pechery Monastery. It is difficult to believe that this note was written after his flight to Lithuania. In the opinion of Yasinsky, who tried to explain the content of this postscript, these writings of state importance referred to the above-mentioned negotiations for the surrender of certain Livonian fortresses. Yasinsky considers that the tsar later saw this document and convinced himself of Kurbsky's innocence. This was then in fact a text which could not have aroused the wrath of the tsar. Evidently this postscript was written either before or during Kurbsky's flight, when Kurbsky might still have been in doubt as to the wisdom of this step.⁷⁰

When did Kurbsky live in the Pskov-Pechery Monastery in the 'small cabin'? Ikonnikov⁷¹ considers that he travelled to a service at the Pskov-Pechery Monastery from Velikiye Luki between the end of 1562 and March 1563. Yasinsky, however, thinks that Kurbsky travelled from Dorpat (Yur'yev, Est. Tartu) some little time later,

⁶⁷ *R.I.B.*, XXXI, col. 410.

⁶⁸ Petukhov, 'Nekotoryye fakty . . .', p. 262 (*Trudy X Arkheologicheskogo Syezda*).

⁶⁹ *R.I.B.*, XXXI, col. 359-60.

⁷⁰ Yasinsky, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

⁷¹ *Opyt russkoy istoriografii*, II, part 1, Kiev, 1908, p. 833.

and this is more likely, as from Dorpat to the Pskov-Pechery Monastery is not more than 60 versts, and it was when Kurbsky was in Dorpat that he was negotiating the surrender of the Livonian fortresses, i.e. between December 1563⁷² and April 1564, when he fled the country.

It would be equally incorrect, however, to conclude from this document that its addressees were fellow-conspirators of Kurbsky's who were plotting against their sovereign. The tsar undertook serious investigations after Kurbsky's flight, more particularly as he had fled not alone, but with twelve other nobles. Kurbsky's servant, Shibanov, who was captured by the tsar's officers and sent to Moscow, recounted in detail the 'many treacherous deeds' of his master. In these circumstances, had the elders of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery really been Kurbsky's accomplices, it can safely be assumed that their guilt would have been discovered much earlier than is suggested by Maslennikova and Lur'ye. It must be stressed that the first two letters we have dealt with here are mainly about the so-called Nicodemus Gospel and that in all the letters appear Kurbsky's exhortations on the desirability of influencing the tsar in the spirit of the *Izbrannaya Rada*. These exhortations, however, do not exceed the usual journalistic limits of the 16th century, and we have no reason to suppose that Kornily or Vas'yan Muromtsev ever shared Kurbsky's views on this subject. Thus Maslennikova's conjectures⁷³ and those put forward by Lur'ye⁷⁴ are a faulty interpretation of the facts we have just considered. The fact that Kurbsky became so prolific a letter-writer shortly before his flight was probably due to his living at that time in honorary exile in Dorpat, where he must have had abundant leisure for correspondence.⁷⁵

Maslennikova's assertion of Kornily's sympathy for the 'non-possessors' does not withstand criticism, since it is based not on known and indisputable facts, but on A. N. Nasonov's observations.⁷⁶ Nasonov reached the conclusion in his introduction to the publication of the various compilations (*svody*) of the Pskov chronicles⁷⁷ that the Stroyev compilation, or Third Pskov Chronicle, differs from the other compilations in that it alone of all the known Pskov compilations reflects the anti-Muscovite tendencies of its author. Nasonov considers that this is the voice of Pskov opposition to Muscovite autocracy, 'bitterly hostile' to the grand duke. Nasonov's interesting ideas deserve attention, but his attempt to prove that the anti-Muscovite tendency of the chronicle is connected with the Abbot Kornily,

⁷² Yasinsky, *op. cit.*, p. 72, note 2.

⁷³ Maslennikova, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-14.

⁷⁴ Lur'ye, *op. cit.*, pp. 471-3.

⁷⁵ Sadikov, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

⁷⁶ A. N. Nasonov, 'Iz istorii pskovskogo letopisaniya', *Istoricheskiye Zapiski*, AN SSSR, XVIII, 1946.

⁷⁷ *Pskovskaya letopis'*, AN SSSR, 1941.

whom he supposes to have taken part either in the editing or in the writing itself of the chronicle, must be considered as a hypothesis—and, in view of all that is definitely known of Kornily's activities, a most questionable hypothesis.

Attempts to connect Kornily with the Pskov chronicles are not new. Ikonnikov⁷⁸ considered that the chronicle compilation ending in 1547 was written by Kornily. The acceptance of this hypothesis would give us a different picture of Kornily, which tallies better with the indisputably known facts about Kornily's activities, as this compilation was more pro-Muscovite in tone. The author recognises the union with Muscovy and the supremacy of the grand duke as necessary, although the activities of the grand duke's local administrators are strongly criticised. It would appear that Klyuchevsky⁷⁹ was nearest to the truth in considering that the *Tale of the Monastery of the Caves*, written in 1531 by Kornily, was later used by various compilers of the Pskov chronicles.

Nasonov, and with him Maslennikova, attempts to prove by a selection of facts, mainly considered out of their context, that all the activities of Kornily and of his monastery were an expression of local Pskovian opinion (opposition). If we accept this premise, then this selection of facts might appear convincing. But, in so far as the majority of the facts actually indicate the opposite, the concurrence of quotations between the 'Tale of the Foundation of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery' which was re-edited and expunged between 1583 and 1587 by a certain monk Grigory, also apparently an icon-painter, and of which various versions exist (the best known being that copied by the monk Iokim in 1692), and the Third Pskov Chronicle of 1567 may be explained without attributing both books to Kornily. In the first place, Grigory was looking for material dealing with miracles connected with the monastery and in particular with Kornily himself who, by 1581, was already locally venerated as a saint and the patron and defender of the town of Pskov. Secondly, the existence of a copy of the 1567 compilation of the Pskov Chronicle in the monastery does not necessarily mean that it was written there, but is more likely due to the indisputable fact that both the Abbot Kornily and the Elder Vas'yan Muromtsev were, for the 16th century,⁸⁰ remarkably cultured men and great book-lovers. In the library of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery there was an extensive collection of manuscripts covering a wide range and including the works of Maksim Grek, Vas'yan Patrikeyev's *Sobornik*, various documents in Latin, and, what is of interest to us, the *Russkiy letopisets* (Russian Chronicler), possibly a copy of the 1567 com-

⁷⁸ V. Ikonnikov, *Opyt russkoy istoriografii*, II, part 1, Kiev, 1908, p. 828.

⁷⁹ V. O. Klyuchevsky, *op. cit.*, p. 249. ⁸⁰ *Starina i Novizna*, VII, pp. 264-6.

pilation, and the *Ulozheniye ob yektenii* (Rules for the Order of Prayer), at the end of which is a note that it was brought in 1561 from Mount Athos by the monk Levky (Lucius) of Cappadocia. When it is remembered that the traditional summons to national unity, the 'Discourse on the Ruin of the Land of Rus' was found in the Pskov-Pechery Monastery,⁸¹ and this fact is compared with Kornily's rationalism and critical mind, which have already been commented upon, with the high appreciation of his theological scholarship given by the Archbishop of Novgorod, Feodosy:⁸² 'Thou thyself knowest the Holy Scriptures in their fulness', with Artemy's discussions with those of the Romish faith, with Kurbsky's protests in his letters to Vas'yan Muromtsev against the laxity of the elders of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery in the matter of the Nicodemus Gospel and his description of Kornily and Vas'yan Muromtsev in the 'History of the Grand Duke of Muscovy' as 'men learned in the Scriptures', then we get a definite impression of 'liberalism', especially in the choice of books. Kornily as a churchman does not entirely fit into the traditional pattern of possessors and non-possessors. The position of the monastery on the frontier and the protection given to it by the heads of the Muscovite state rendered it necessary for Kornily, in his work, to adhere to the principles and directions of Muscovite church policy. At the same time, the proximity of the West and the existence in Pskovia of a tradition of spiritual inquiry and love of freedom softened the rigid intransigence of the Muscovites and made them more thoughtful in their approach to intellectual problems, and thus created an atmosphere of a certain spiritual tolerance around the person of Kornily. It would therefore seem feasible to say that in Kornily's works there reappear the principles and spirit of St Sergy of Radonezh,⁸³ although, of course, in accordance with the development of theories and ideas of his century, Kornily is more concerned with the material problems which arose in an already united Russian state. On the other hand, in the personal behaviour of Kornily we find features completely out of the ordinary for a Muscovite Josephian leader of the Church. For instance Kornily led a very simple and frugal life and he and the brotherhood used to work whole days in the fields.⁸⁴

⁸¹ For the latest study of this question see: A. Solov'yov. 'Le dit de la ruine de la terre russe', (*Byzantion*, XXII, (1952), Brussels, 1953, p. 108. It appears probable that the 'Discourse' was in the monastery library in Kornily's time, since there would seem to be some traces of its influence on Kurbsky's correspondence with Muromtsev. This, however, is a subject for a special study.

⁸² *Dopolneniye k aktam istoricheskim*, I, no. 35, p. 36.

⁸³ G. P. Fedotov, *Svyatye drevney Rusi*, Paris, 1931, pp. 143; Smolitch, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-100.

⁸⁴ Serebryansky, *op. cit.*, p. 341.

III

The third period in the history of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery in the 16th century opens in 1570 with the tragic death of Kornily (in the 70th year of his life and the 42nd of his abbotship) and of the Elder Vas'yan Muromtsev. The circumstances of their deaths are mysterious. Serebryansky⁸⁵ considers that the oral legend of Ivan IV's murder of Kornily in front of the monastery gates, when he first saw the newly-constructed fortifications, has no foundation in fact. Karamzin, Kostomarov,⁸⁶ Petukhov⁸⁷ and, in his turn, the author of this article all heard this legend from the monks themselves. Serebryansky thinks that Kornily and Vas'yan Muromtsev were executed in Pskov together with the 190 Pskovians whose executions are recorded in Ivan IV's 'Synodic'.⁸⁸ The chronicle makes no mention of these happenings. But the fact that the tsar refrained at the last moment from treating Pskov as he had treated Novgorod does not exclude the possibility of the execution of various individuals considered to be hostile towards Muscovite policy.

The Abbot Kornily at the head of the Pskovian clergy, met the tsar in Pskov⁸⁹ and after this event there is no reliable information as to his fate. Kurbsky records the rumours of Kornily's and Vas'yan Muromtsev's martyrdom.⁹⁰ The 'Tale of the Foundation of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery', rewritten by Grigory, laconically records the fact of Kornily's death by the tsar's will.⁹¹ Ikonnikov, Nasonov, Lur'ye and Maslennikova⁹² are inclined to think that the explanation lies in the relations of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery with Kurbsky, but in view of known facts this theory, as already demonstrated, cannot be considered plausible. The routing of the 'ideological opponents' of the tsar, which occurred in Novgorod,⁹³ meant that the churches and the monasteries were sacked, and monastery lands were confiscated and became the property of the tsar, and that the monasteries then lost all their charters. In the case of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery, however, the tsar not only did not touch the monastery, not only instigated no search for 'traitors', but, on the contrary, made a rich donation for the making of a silver frame for the miracle-working icon⁹⁴ and presented the monastery with several other gifts.⁹⁵ Apparently, Ivan IV, immediately after Kornily's death,

⁸⁵ Serebryansky, *op. cit.*, pp. 345-6.

⁸⁶ Kostomarov, *op. cit.*, p. 518.

⁸⁷ Petukhov, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

⁸⁸ Ustryalov, *Skazaniya knyazya Kurbskogo*, St Petersburg, 1842, p. 282. S. F. Platonov, in *Ivan Groznyy*, Berlin, 1924, p. 115, states however that there were no executions in Pskov.

⁸⁹ *P.S.R.L.*, IV, p. 343.

⁹⁰ Ustryalov, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

⁹¹ Serebryansky, *op. cit.*, pp. 345-6.

⁹² Ikonnikov, Nasonov, Lur'ye, Maslennikova, *opera citata*.

⁹³ A. Pavlov, *Istoricheskiy ocherk sekulyarizatsii tserkovnykh zemel' v Rossii*, Odessa, 1871, c. 154-5.

⁹⁴ *Starina i Novizna*, VII, p. 256.

⁹⁵ Petukhov, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

surrendered his body to the monastery. There still exists at the Pskov-Pechery Monastery an unpaved path—from the monastery gates to the cathedral of the Assumption, the so-called Path of Blood—along which, according to legend, the tsar ‘with tears of repentance’ carried Kornily’s body. Kornily was originally buried in the catacombs (‘the Cave which God had made’) and his body lay there for 120 years until it was transferred, in 1690, to its final resting place in the cathedral of the Assumption. Thus it would seem most probable that Kornily was indeed killed as a result of a sudden flash of anger on the part of the tsar—possibly occasioned by Ivan IV’s first sight of the fortifications—or, by analogy with Novgorod, that his execution was an incident in the general campaign against the most powerful members of the church hierarchy.⁹⁶

The life of the monastery continued under the aegis of the tsar. The abbots who succeeded Kornily, Savva (1571–2) and Sil’vestr (1572–6?), according to still extant documents, were personally appointed, i.e. the tradition of the rulers’ patronage of the monastery endured.⁹⁷ The influence of the monastery continued to increase and played no less a part than previously in Pskovia.⁹⁸

It must be pointed out that, during the national disaster, which descended on this district in 1581, when the King of Poland, Stefan Batory, Ivan IV’s fortunate rival, appeared before Pskov with a large army composed of Polish, German, Hungarian and other troops,⁹⁹ and proceeded to lay siege to the town, the Pskov-Pechery Monastery was included in the system of frontier defence. The attacks of the monastery’s garrison on the Polish lines of communication so harrassed the enemy that Batory sent a strong force with artillery to take the monastery. The successful defence of Pskov and the Pechery monastery gave rise to literary and oral legends.¹⁰⁰ It is characteristic that in these legends Kornily already appears as the heavenly defender of Pskov, and in the vision of Dorofey, he, together with the Blessed Antony of the Kiev-Pechery Lavra, accompanied the Holy Virgin and passed through the air in a column of light from the Pskov-Pechery Monastery to Pskov. It is interesting that icons were brought from the monastery to Pskov by the Abbot Tikhon and that, in the legends, the moral support afforded by them, and by the Pechery monks and their Abbot, is very much stressed. At this time there arose the legend, based mainly on rumoured foreign evidence, that the glorious defence of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery

⁹⁶ *P.S.R.L.*, IV, p. 310.

⁹⁷ Serebryansky, *op. cit.*, p. 353.

⁹⁸ Serebryansky and Sinaysky, *opera citata*.

⁹⁹ For the composition of Batory’s forces, cf. V. Vasil’yevsky, ‘Pol’skaya i nemetskaya pechat’ o voyne Batoriya s Ioannom Groznym’, (*Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveshcheniya*, St Petersburg, January 1889, p. 137).

¹⁰⁰ V. I. Malyshev, Introduction to *Povest’ o prikhozhenii Stefana Batoriya na grad Pskov*, AN SSSR, Moscow-Leningrad, 1952, p. 531.



PLATE I

was due to 'an old man, in a cloud of radiance, who rode day and night round the defences and appeared in the breaches of the walls'. Grigory, entering this legend into his edition of the 'Tale of the Foundation of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery', adds: 'This man must have been St Nicholas the Miracle-worker'.¹⁰¹

In the light of these facts the icons reproduced here take on a special significance. Their originals are to be found in the Pskov-Pechery Monastery, in the Church of St Nicholas 'over the gates'. The first illustration (see plate I) shows a wooden statue of St Nicholas the Miracle-worker, known in the monastery as St Nicholas the Warrior (*Nikola Ratnyy*) on account of the sword which he holds in his right hand; in his left hand he holds a church.¹⁰² The walls of the frame on each side of the statue and the roof above it are divided into thirty-six panels, of which thirty-two are icons, and the four lowest are entirely decorative. The effect is that of a large icon shrine (*kiot*). In 1937 when the author of this article saw these icons for the first time they appeared practically indistinguishable, and in the inventory of monastery property taken in 1920 there is an expressive explanatory note on the subject: 'What is painted here is unknown on account of dirt and age'. The icons were then cleaned and were revealed as a magnificent surround (*kleymo*) composed of scenes from the life of St Nicholas the Miracle-worker and four icons representing four other saints. Those icons which were in the best state of preservation were photographed and, as the result of the author's investigations, it was established that they were good examples of the late 16th-century manner and similar in the range of colours to products of the so-called Novgorod school¹⁰³ depicting scenes from the life of St Nicholas the Miracle-worker, which are reproduced by N. P. Kondakov in *The Russian Ikon*.¹⁰⁴ Only the photograph reproduced here (*cf.* plate II), the second from the bottom on the dexter side, has been preserved. This icon proved to be a representation of the Blessed Kornily, abbot of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery (1529-70).

The statue of St Nicholas the Miracle-worker is of wood and is 157 cm (5ft 6ins) high. The trunk of the body is carved smoothly, and only the head and hands are intricately and deeply carved. There is a silvered wooden halo which frames the head on the wall behind the statue. During the 19th century the vestments of the statue were

¹⁰¹ Serebryansky, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-50.

¹⁰² The church, which is of a later date than the main statue and probably replaces an earlier model, is symbolic and does not represent any specific church.

¹⁰³ The icons of this type are variously attributed to the Novgorod, early Muscovite, or, more probably, to the Pskov, schools of iconography: for the latter, *cf.* Igor Grabar, 'Die Malerschule des alten Pskow zur Frage der Dezentralisierung des künstlerischen Nachlasses von Byzanz' (*Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, Heft I, Leipzig, 1929-30).

¹⁰⁴ These conclusions were upheld after discussion at the Kondakov Institute at the end of 1937, when N. L. Okunev, N. P. Toll', and I. I. Myslivec, all experts on Russian iconography, were present.



PLATE II

evidently clumsily coloured with white oil paint, with the crosses picked out in pale yellow. On the left centre of the statue (the black marks on the photograph) are the author's attempts at a trial cleaning. Evidently the Saint's chasuble was originally painted with the pattern of small crosses characteristic of the vestments of St Nicholas of Myra.

To what period should the statue be attributed? It is common knowledge that the tradition of carved figures of saints penetrated slowly into Russia and at a comparatively late period.¹⁰⁵ It is known that carved figures representing, as here, St Nicholas and also St Parasceva (*Paraskeva Pyatnitsa*), were introduced in 1540 into Pskov by travellers from other lands (probably from White Russia), where they aroused great agitation, which finally made necessary the personal intervention of the Archbishop of Novgorod, Makary.¹⁰⁶ From the comparison of photographs of various statues of St Nicholas¹⁰⁷ it may be concluded that the Pskov-Pechery Nicholas represents an improvement on the statue of Nikola brought to Pskov in 1540, with which it shares the dramatisation of the face combined with the tranquility and monumental economy of detail of the statue as a whole.

The icon of the Blessed Kornily (47×17.5 cm = $18\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{3}{4}$ ins) is executed in the traditional manner for the painting of figures standing before Our Lord, enthroned in the composition known as the Deesis, and Kornily is represented clad in the vestments of a monk-priest, his hands raised in an attitude of supplication. The face is painted with the realism of a professional icon-painter and, what is most interesting, the beard is reddish in colour. This bears witness to the part played by portraiture in this icon. Kornily was 69 when he died, and it can be inferred that the icon must have been executed in the monastery shortly after his death, when it was still possible for the painter to discover this detail. The monastic hood is black, the mantle brown and the cassock white. The general tone of the icon ranges from yellow to brown, and the folds in the garments are outlined in brown, with white for lighting effect.

When were these icons placed in their present position? In the *Perepisnaya kniga* of 1586 they are not mentioned, while in the 1639 edition their existence is not stressed, i.e. they were then no novelty. The growing interest in miracles coincides with the period of the rewriting of the 'Tale of the Foundation of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery' by Grigory, who was especially interested in legends and pays particular attention to St Mark, the legendary first hermit of the

¹⁰⁵ N. I. Petrov, 'Reznyye izobrazheniya svyatogo Nikolaya Mozhayskogo i istoricheskaya sud'ba ikh' (*Trudy XI Arkheologicheskogo Syezda*, II, Moscow, 1902, pp. 137-45).

¹⁰⁶ N. Ye. Andreyev, 'Mitropolit Makariy, etc.' (*Seminarium Kondakovianum*, VII, Prague, 1935).

¹⁰⁷ Cf. A. I. Nekrasov, *Drevnerusskoye izobrazitel'noye iskusstvo*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1937, pp. 203-6.

Pskov-Pechery Monastery. If we remember that the author of the 'Tale', Grigory, was an icon-painter,¹⁰⁸ it is feasible that Grigory painted this sequence of icons and possibly carved the statue of St Nicholas the Warrior, the legend about whose defence of the monastery had fired his imagination. To this it may be added that in 1938 there was a 16th-century 'Life of St Nicholas the Miracle-worker' kept in the treasury of the monastery. For these reasons the whole complex may be considered to be of 16th-century origin and placed during Ioakim's abbotship, but before 1601, in the church of St Nicholas.

Originally, however, the whole composition was in a frame of a different shape, to which the added corner pieces of the icons bear witness. Evidently the statue and the whole collection of icons were removed in 1722, in connection with the order of the Holy Synod about the removal of statues from churches, but from 1729 onwards these statues were generally reintroduced into the churches.¹⁰⁹ In this case, however, the whole iconostasis in the church of St Nicholas was remade, judging by the inscription on it, during the reign of the Empress Elizabeth I, and, as the inscription has it, at the time when her successor was the Grand Duke Peter Feodorovich, the future Peter III.

In the sequence of the four saints on the icon frame, the evidence of two distinct pairs of icons is very obvious. On the right the Blessed Kornily and the Blessed Mark (of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery), and on the left, the Blessed Antony of the Kiev-Pechery Lavra and either the Blessed Feodosy or, more probably, the Blessed Mark of the Kiev-Pechery Lavra. This is the only remaining illustration in icon-form of the idea in which the rulers of the monastery were particularly interested, both earlier and especially in the 16th and 17th centuries,¹¹⁰ of the similarity between the Pskov-Pechery Monastery and the Kiev-Pechery Lavra. This idea is also reflected in the 'Tale of the Foundation of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery', as edited by Grigory, the icon-painter.

Thus, at the end of the 16th century, the icons of the monastery reflect the main trends of its development.

The monastery continued to enjoy all its privileges and, after the siege of 1581, was granted unlimited quantities of gold and silver, and charters recognising its freedom from the jurisdiction of the local authorities. It played a part in the election of Boris Godunov as tsar.¹¹¹ The Pskov-Pechery Monastery continued to increase its influence and, during the whole of the 16th century, remained a bulwark of Muscovite Orthodoxy and, gradually, as Pskovia became part of Central Russia, it became a centre of Orthodoxy for the whole country.

¹⁰⁸ Serebryansky, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

¹⁰⁹ N. I. Petukhov, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

¹¹⁰ Serebryansky, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-1, 56-9.

¹¹¹ S. F. Platonov, 'Bor'ba za Moskovskiy prestol v 1598 godu' (*Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveshcheniya*, St Petersburg, October 1898, p. 273).